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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/09/2011
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: MEXICO PLANS TO HOLD UNHRC SPECIAL SESSION ON
LEBANON

REF: SECSTATE 130145

Classified By: ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR ALAN MELTZER,
REASONS: 1.4(B/D).

11. (C) Summary. Poloff delivered talking points in reftel to Rodrigo Labardini, Director General for Human Rights at the Secretariat for Foreign Relations (SRE), on August 9.

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Currently the president of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), Mexico expressed strong views on the recent request for a special session on alleged Israeli human rights violations in Lebanon. Labardini stated that it is within the rights of the HRC to hold the session, emphasizing that the limitations described in Article 12 of Chapter IV of the UN Charter are not necessarily applicable. He expects the session to take place on Friday, August 11. End summary.

12. (C) Poloff delivered talking points on reftel to Rodrigo Labardini, Director General for Human Rights at the SRE, on August 9. While Labardini acknowledged the limitations placed on the General Assembly by Article 12, which prohibits recommendations on a dispute under consideration by the UN Security Council (UNSC), he stated that the purviews of the HRC and the UNSC differ - addressing human rights and issues of peace and security, respectively. On these grounds, Mexico believes that the HRC can proceed with the requested special session on alleged Israeli human rights violations without violating Article 12, despite the current UNSC efforts on a draft resolution to halt the violence in Lebanon and Israel. Labardini conceded that this position could be challenged by the argument that the issue of human rights is an element of security. Stepping around the thorniness of Article 12, Labardini repeatedly emphasized the need of the HRC to conform to the procedural grounds laid out in Resolution 60/251, stating that any member can request a special session so long as it holds the support of one third of the 47-member Council, and stated that there are already 16 signatories to the current request. The session is planned for the morning of Friday, August 11, and not expected to extend beyond that day.

13. (C) As HRC President, Mexico is intensely focused on establishing the institution's legitimacy as a human rights institution, particularly with the burden that the HRC still bears many similarities to the discredited Commission on Human Rights. Labardini made the point that the SRE recently sent HRC President Luis Alfonso de Alba to Geneva specifically to preside over this session. To build credibility, Labardini said Mexico is striving for the HRC to reach balanced resolutions by consensus.

14. (C) However, pointing to the history of the Middle East

conflict, Labardini admitted that arriving at a balanced position on the current crisis in Lebanon and Israel will be difficult, acknowledging that the polarized views and the composition of the HRC pose a significant problem. Nonetheless, he said that it is critical for the HRC to account for the views of both sides as fairly as possible. He cited the effort in the HRC's first session to moderate the debate on the Israeli and Palestinian conflict by striking the move to insert the topic permanently on the agenda. Labardini said that the members requesting the special session are currently working on a draft text of a resolution, which he expects to receive on Thursday, August 10. He reported that certain Western member countries are already drafting amendments.

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